

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 451

By Patton

A RESOLUTION to create a special joint committee to study utilization of the Tennessee State Guard, its functions, duties and funding.

WHEREAS, in 1970, the Tennessee State Guard was authorized under Chapter 596, Public Acts of 1970, and as amended, is codified in Tennessee Code Annotated, Sections 58-1-401, *et seq.*; it is composed of "...such individuals between sixteen (16) and seventy-five (75) years of age as shall volunteer for service therein."; and

WHEREAS, since the events of September 11, 2001, public officials and citizens of the United States have recognized that this nation now faces the threat of attack by international terrorist organizations and elements who would not hesitate to employ violent means to damage or destroy our institutions, infrastructure and population to achieve their ends; and

WHEREAS, the United States has responded to those threats by undertaking a number of initiatives, both abroad and domestically, to counter terrorist threats; the domestic initiatives include the reorganization and integration of a number of federal agencies and programs under the umbrella of the new Department of Homeland Security, and coordination with corresponding agencies and programs at the state and local governmental levels; and

WHEREAS, initiatives abroad include Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi Freedom, in which large numbers of National Guard units from various states were deployed to augment regular U.S. military forces in the Middle East and elsewhere; and

WHEREAS, the resultant reduction of National Guard personnel in the continental United States creates a temporary lessening of available troops for homeland security, it is logical to consider the use of the various state defense forces or state guard units to augment homeland security during future National Guard deployments; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee State Guard has proven its value in times of natural or manmade disasters, times of need for families of Tennessee National Guardsmen, times of need for veterans, and in providing security for celebrations and commemorations and for armories in time of National Guard deployment; and

WHEREAS, in responding to and participating in the national war against terrorism, Tennessee should make the best use of the valuable resource manifested in the Tennessee State Guard by augmenting its duties, improving its equipment and training and seeking adequate funding; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that there is hereby created a special joint committee to study the utilization, improvement and funding of the Tennessee State Guard to make it an effective and efficient asset in the maintenance of homeland security. The study shall include, but shall not be limited to, emphasizing the role of the State Guard as a reserve to the National Guard, feasibility of conducting State Guard training in compliance with U.S. Department of Defense standards, methods of acquiring surplus Department of Defense equipment, integration of the State Guard into a comprehensive plan of state homeland security and securing adequate and dependable funding.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the committee shall consist of three (3) members of the House of Representatives and three (3) members of the Senate, to be appointed by the respective speakers.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all appropriate state agencies shall provide assistance to the special joint committee upon request of the chair.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all legislative members of the special joint committee who are duly elected members of the General Assembly shall remain members of such committee until the committee reports its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the special joint committee shall be convened by the member with the most years of continuous service in the General Assembly; and at its first meeting shall elect a chair, vice chair, and such other officers the committee deems necessary.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the special committee shall timely report its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation or interim reports, to the One Hundred Fourth General Assembly no later than February 15, 2005, at which time the committee shall cease to exist.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that appropriate copies of this resolution be sent to General Gus Hargett, Adjutant General and General Jerry D. Humble, Director of the Office of Homeland Security.